

Call Centre and Help Desk

INTRODUCTION

Establishing and managing a call centre and help desk requires a range of specialist knowledge and people skills. In this intensive five-day programme, an overview of the core areas is presented with clear guidelines given for implementation.

Presentation of key theory is blended with case studies, group discussions, practical exercises and processes to ensure that customer satisfaction and key objectives, such as targets and service level agreements are achieved.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- Those who are responsible for or involved in establishing and managing a new call centre or help desk, as well as those with experience who wish to develop specific aspects of their existing operation
- HR professionals and trainers responsible for established call centres or help desks where changes in performance or development of staff are wanted

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

- How to set or interpret business strategy to achieve call centre and help desk goals, targets and service levels
- How to select and reject the right people for the operation
- How to set up an effective training and development programme
- How to coach the team and keep them motivated even in difficult periods
- How to implement a performance management and appraisal system
- How to trouble shoot and solve performance problems
- How to build a culture that people will be proud to be a part of

TRAINING METHODOLOGY

Participants will learn through a combination of theory, review of best practice working methods and practice. Learning methods will include group discussion, syndicate work, pair work, skills practice and application of methods to participant's real life situations. This is a highly participative programme. A comprehensive course manual supports delivery.

PROGRAMME SUMMARY

This programme will be of benefit to all participants seeking to:

- Increase standards of service and customer satisfaction
- Improve morale, team work and staff retention
- Increase efficiency through better use of resources

PROGRAMME OUTLINE

DAY 1 - Strategy and Service Levels

- Understanding the role of the call centre and help desk manager
- Analysing business needs and defining/reviewing the scope of your operation
- Interpreting strategy and setting service level agreements (SLAs)
- Forecasting call traffic and scheduling staff
- Understanding key contact centre terms and using a common vocabulary
- The importance of key performance indicators (KPIs)
- Using KPIs, SLAs and other measures
- Using Management Information Systems (MIS) as a reporting tool
- Recognising performance gaps and identifying their causes
- Levering performance - exploring options, procedures and 'what if...' scenarios, making performance happen
- Pre-empting common call centre and help desk set-up issues
- Creating understanding of the aims and objectives of improving the quality of customer care on the telephone, by letter and email

DAY 2 - Recruitment and Selection

- Building your core team - identifying the required competencies to support you
- Key stage in preparation - job analysis, catchment area profiles, developing a person specification and job description
- Identifying a correct match for the job to increase retention
- Attracting applicants through best practice techniques
- Systematic selection - reviewing popular methods including keyboard and visual tests, psychometrics, face-to-face interview and group discussion
- Follow through - process checks to ensure all is working and refinements are made as necessary

DAY 3 - Training and Skills Development

- Ensuring the call centre and help desk is ready for training
- Understanding the training process – from beginning to end
- Foundation skills for call centre and help desk training programmes
 - listening skills
 - empathy skills
 - call control
 - product knowledge
 - rapport and matching skills
 - pre-closing and closing skills
 - complaint handling
 - objection handling
 - systems usage
- Effective training techniques in the call centre and help desk
- Understanding why coaching is important - the benefits to staff, managers, the company and its clients
- Choosing a coaching process and documenting performance
- Implementing the coaching cycle
- Understanding a range of coaching styles, tools and techniques
- Running a formal coaching programme
 - Planning and preparation
 - Designing the assessment criteria
 - Communicating the plan
 - Setting the scene with an individual
 - Giving initial feedback
 - Coaching in the workplace
 - Consolidating progress
 - Ongoing reinforcement
- Side-by-side coaching versus remote assessment
- Choosing a coaching style appropriate to your staff member

DAY 4 - Motivation and Management

- Understanding the process of management for the call/contact centre
- The importance of briefing and delegation skills
- Dealing with emotional barriers to success, such as negativity and resistance
- Fine tuning interpersonal and communication skills - including addressing non-verbal communication issues
- Understanding leadership roles and your preferred method
- Recognising and working your own motivational drivers
- Building rapport with team members
- Troubleshooting performance problems - understanding the links between behaviour and results
- Feedback skills - giving praise and reprimand
- Dealing with difficult staff situations - such as underperformance, lateness or absence
- Understanding the performance management cycle and applying in your call centre and help desk

DAY 5 - Building the Call Centre and Help Desk Culture and Implementing the Learning back in the Workplace

- Recognising the power of an inspiring mission statement, positive values and aligned call centre and help desk practices and processes
- As an ambassador and spokesperson, managing your own mental, physical and emotional state when facing difficulties
- Anticipating implementation issues and preparing to gain the cooperation of colleagues in the workplace
- Reviews of key learning, methods and key techniques to take back to the workplace
- Setting objectives for achieving or increasing performance standards and levels of customer service in the call centre/help desk
- Translating your objectives into a workable plan of action